

Office of National Drug Control Policy

Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse

Columbia, South Carolina

Profile of Drug Indicators

August 2002



ONDCP Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse staff compiled this profile using the most recent data available from open sources. The data presented are as accurate as the sources from which they were drawn. The information contained in this profile should not be used to rank or compare States or jurisdictions, due to differences in data collection and reporting methods.

Columbia, South Carolina

The following profile contains information on demographics, political figures, funding, programs, crime, drug use, drug trafficking, and enforcement statistics.

Demographics¹

- Columbia city population: 116,278 (2000 Census)
- Race/Ethnicity: 49.9% white, 46.62% black or African American, 0.26% American Indian and Alaska Native, 1.75% Asian, 0.9% Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, 1.38% some other race, 1.38% two or more races, 3.07% Hispanic
- The city of Columbia is located in Lexington County and Richland County.

Politics²

- Mayor: Bob Coble
- Council Members: E.W. Cromartie, II; Jim Papadea; Hamilton Osborne Jr.; Anne M. Sinclair; Sam Davis; Tameika Isaac
- Columbia Chief of Police: Charles P. Austin, Sr.

Programs/Initiatives

- Crime Stoppers³
Since May 1982, the Columbia Crime Stoppers have received more than 10,000 calls with tips that have helped solve over 4,011 cases, 1,733 of which were drug cases. Crime Stoppers is a non-profit organization working to obtain pertinent information that could lead to an arrest.
- DARE⁴
In February 1989, the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy began to certify DARE instructors. The Columbia Police Department was represented in the class and became one of the first law enforcement agencies in the Midlands of South Carolina to adopt the program. DARE was introduced on a pilot basis in Hyatt Park Elementary School in Columbia in early March 1989. Since that time the program has expanded to include DARE Middle School and Senior High School programs. DARE Middle school programs began in 1993 and DARE Senior High school programs were implemented in September 1996.

Funding

- Drug-Free Communities Support Program grantee awarded funding by ONDCP in conjunction with the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP).⁵
 - FY 1999: The Lexington/Richland Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council, which is part of the Fighting Back Coalition, was awarded \$99,145. The Coalition is working to reduce youth substance abuse by increasing community awareness of its dangers. It is also working to improve collaboration among the county's different communities.
- FY 2001 SAMHSA Discretionary Funds received in Columbia: ⁶
 - Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS)

- Grantee: South Carolina State Dept of Mental Health; Program: Data Infrastructure Grants; FY 2001 Spending: \$99,992; Program Period: 9/30/2001 – 9/29/2004
- Grantee: South Carolina Mental Health; Program: Action Grant Program Phase I; FY 2001 Spending: \$131,822; Program Period: 9/30/2001 – 8/31/2005
- Grantee: South Carolina Dept of Mental Health; Program: Children's Services; FY 2001 Spending: \$906,639; Program Period: 9/30/1999 – 8/31/2005
- Grantee: South Carolina Department of Mental Health; Program: Coalitions for Prevention; FY 2001 Spending: \$349,218; Program Period: 9/30/2000 – 8/31/2003
- Grantee: Federation of Families of South Carolina; Program: Children's Services Family Network; FY 2001 Spending: \$70,000; Program Period: 9/30/2001 – 9/29/2004
- South Carolina Share (Lexington County); Program: Consumer Networking Grants; FY 2001 Spending: \$56,380; Program Period: 9/30/2001-9/29/2004
- Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP)
 - Grantee: State of South Carolina; Program: State Incentive Cooperative Agreements; FY 2001 Spending: \$2,918,649; Program Period: 9/30/2000 – 9/29/2003
- FY 2002 Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities⁷
 - Richland County
 - City Year Columbia received \$39,280 to lead middle and high school students in prevention, leadership, team-building and service activities.
 - Columbia Urban League Inc. received \$41,414 to prevent minority youth from experimenting with alcohol, tobacco and other drugs.
 - LRADAC, the Behavioral Health Center of the Midlands, received \$39,176 for a program to help fifth and sixth graders make the transition from elementary school to middle school with alcohol, tobacco and other drug abuse education.
 - The Richland County Sheriff's Department received \$35,320 to provided Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) classes to fifth graders in 25 local elementary schools.
 - The South Carolina Department of Public Safety received \$27,735 to provide training for 30 D.A.R.E. candidates which will later be placed in S.C. schools to teach the D.A.R.E. curriculum.
 - St. Andrew's Lutheran Church received \$15,675 to fund a summer camp for at-risk elementary and high school students.
 - 100 Black Men of Greater Columbia Inc. received \$63,702 for alcohol, tobacco and other drug abuse peer education and mentoring programs for at-risk youth in the Richland area.

Crime and Drug-Related Crime

- During 2000 in Columbia, there were 493 robbery offenses known to law enforcement.⁸

Number of Offenses Known to Law Enforcement, Columbia, 1999-2000

Offense	1999*	2000*
Murder and non-negligent manslaughter	14	12
Forcible Rape	74	40
Robbery	510	493
Aggravated assault	860	955
Burglary	1,290	1,209
Larceny-theft	--	6,508
Motor vehicle theft	748	750
Arson	51	47

*Due to changes in reporting practices, annexations, and/or incomplete data, figures are not comparable to previous years' data.

- According to the Columbia Police Department, during the time period of January 1 to July 31, 2002, there were 352 total drug-related incidents with arrests.⁹

Drug Offenses, Columbia, January 1 to July 31, 2002

Drug Offenses	Number of Incidents	Number of Incidents with Arrests
Loitering to Sell Drugs	5	5
Manufacturing Narcotics	2	1
Possession of Drug with Intent to Distribute	144	130
Sale of Narcotics	7	1
Simple Possession of Narcotics	228	215
Total Drug Offenses	386	352

- During 2000 in the city of Columbia, there were 3,632 drug abuse violation arrests and 70 drug paraphernalia violation arrests.¹⁰

Drug-Related Arrests, Columbia, 2000

	Drug Abuse Violations	Drug Paraphernalia Violations
Lexington County	1,060	45
Richland County	2,572	25
Columbia Total	3,632	70

- During 2000 in Columbia, there were 832 arrests for crack.¹¹

Type of Drug Abuse Violation Arrest, Columbia, 2000

Crack	832
Cocaine	157
Hashish	0
Heroin	44
Marijuana	2,542
Opium	0
Other Narcotics	9
LSD	3
Other Hallucinogens	0
Amphetamines	14
Other Stimulants	0
Other Depressants	1
Other Drugs	16
Unknown Types	14
Total	3,632

Drugs

- Heroin¹²

Heroin has surpassed crack as the drug most associated with serious consequences in Columbia. It is considered “widely” to “somewhat” available. High purity, snortable South American (Colombian) white heroin is widely available in the area. A “bindle,” which is 0.2 grams, costs between \$20 - \$25, and is reported as 62% pure. A “bundle,” which is 2 grams, costs \$225. Users tend to be young adults (ages 18-30) or adults (over 30 years old), and white or black. Injection is the most common form of ingestion.

- Cocaine¹³

Crack cocaine is considered to be “widely” to “somewhat” available and is thought to have replaced marijuana as the most commonly abused substance. A gram of crack cocaine costs \$100. Marijuana users in their teens to early twenties sell crack. Non-violent crimes, such as larceny, robbery, and counterfeiting, are associated with the crack cocaine scene. Users tend to be young adults (ages 18-30) or adults (over 30 years old) and black. Males outnumber females in likeliness to smoke crack. Powder cocaine is also considered “widely” to “somewhat” available, and has recently increased in availability. Younger and older adults are equally likely to use powder cocaine. Users are predominately adolescent males, although novice female user have been increasing. Users tend to be white or black. Auto theft, break-ins, and larcenies are associated with the powder cocaine scene.

- Marijuana¹⁴

Marijuana is considered “widely” available and has increased in availability in Columbia. Mexican commercial is the second most common variety of marijuana in the Columbia area. Mexican or local commercial marijuana sells for \$10 for 3-4

grams and \$180 for one ounce. Adolescents are the predominate user group, although young adults users have slightly increased. Users tend to be black, although white users are increasing (whites are underrepresented in the area). The combination of ecstasy and marijuana is increasingly reported. The use of “wets,” which is marijuana and embalming fluid, is also increasingly reported in the Columbia area.

- Methamphetamine¹⁵
Methamphetamine, although emerging and continuing to trend upward, is not very available. A gram of methamphetamine costs \$175. The youngest age group (13-17 years old) is the predominate user group. Novice users, those using methamphetamine for less than one year before entering treatment, have increased in the Columbia area.
- Younger users, who have been using OxyContin for a few years, are now actively seeking the drug where they previously used it only when it was available.¹⁶
- Ketamine has increased in availability at low levels. A vial of ketamine (½ ounce) costs \$125.
- Ecstasy is often adulterated with peyote. An ecstasy pill costs \$25-\$35. Adolescent users predominate.¹⁷
- According to the DEA Columbia District Office, in May 2002:¹⁸
 - powder cocaine sold for \$25,000-\$30,000 per kilogram with purity levels ranging from 75-95%;
 - commercial grade marijuana (typically produced in Mexico) sold for \$750-\$850 per pound; and
 - GHB sold for \$20 per tablet.

Juveniles

- There were 3,299 juvenile drug abuse violation arrests in South Carolina during 2000.¹⁹

Juvenile Drug-Related Arrests, Columbia, 2000

	Drug Abuse Violations	Drug Paraphernalia Violations
Lexington County	907	37
Richland County	2,392	23
Columbia Total	3,299	60

Enforcement

- As of October 2000, there were 327 law enforcement personnel working in Columbia, 288 of which were officers.²⁰

Trafficking and Seizures

- According to the DEA Columbia District Office, 37 methamphetamine labs were seized in between January 1, 2002 through May 28, 2002. These labs were discovered in private residences, motel rooms, cars, trucks, trailers, and secluded wooded areas.²¹
- There are a large number of gangs in the Columbia area that are mostly involved in drug distribution.²²
- South Carolina law enforcement conducted two heroin seizures from commercial train passengers transporting 5 grams and 56 grams of heroin from New York City to Columbia.²³

Courts

- As of January 2002, there were two drug courts operating over 2 years in Columbia.²⁴

Treatment

- As of July 2002, there were 982 admissions to drug treatment facilities in Richland County and 377 in Lexington County.²⁵

Drug Treatment Admissions, by County, July 2002

	All Drugs	Marijuana	Cocaine-Crack	Other Drugs
Lexington County	377	165	144	68
Richland County	982	388	460	134

Sources

¹ U.S. Census Bureau Web site: <http://www.census.gov>

² City of Columbia Web site: <http://www.columbiasc.net>

³ Columbia Crime Stoppers Web site: <http://www.columbiasc.net/city/crime.htm>

⁴ Columbia Police Department, Community Services Unit: <http://www.columbiasc.net/city/dare.htm>

⁵ Drug-Free Communities Support Program Web site: <http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/dfcs/index.html>

⁶ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, FY 2001 Formula and Discretionary Grant allotments, South Carolina: <http://www.samhsa.gov/funding/content/states01/State.htm>

⁷ South Carolina Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Services, The BIG Issue, March-August 2001: http://www.daodas.state.sc.us/web/bigissue/bi03_01/3.html

⁸ Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reports, *Crime in the United States, 2000*, October 2001: <http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/ucr.htm>

⁹ Columbia Police Department, Reported Incidents of Drug Abuse Violations in the City of Columbia, January 1 – June 31, 2002.

¹⁰ South Carolina Law Enforcement Division, Drug Related Arrest Data, 1998-2000

¹¹ South Carolina Law Enforcement Division, Type of Drug Abuse Violation, 2000

¹² ONDCP, *Pulse Check: Trends in Drug Abuse*, April 2002:

http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/publications/drugfact/pulsechk/2001/impact_of_sept11.pdf

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ National Drug Intelligence Center, *South Carolina Drug Threat Assessment Update*, May 2002:

<http://www.usdoj.gov/ndic/pubs/1222/1222p.pdf>

¹⁹ South Carolina Law Enforcement Division, Drug-Related Arrest Data, 2000

²⁰ Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reports, *Crime in the United States, 2000*, October 2001: <http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/ucr.htm>

²¹ National Drug Intelligence Center, *South Carolina Drug Threat Assessment Update*, May 2002:

<http://www.usdoj.gov/ndic/pubs/1222/1222p.pdf>

²² National Drug Intelligence Center, *South Carolina Drug Threat Assessment*, December 2001:

<http://www.usdoj.gov/ndic/pubs/717/717p.pdf>

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ OJP Drug Court Clearinghouse and Technical Assistance Project, *Summary of Drug Court Activity by State and County*, January 17, 2002:

<http://www.american.edu/academic.depts/spa/justice/publications/drgchart2k.pdf>

²⁵ South Carolina Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services, Drug Treatment Admissions, FY 2002

This State Profile was prepared by the ONDCP Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse. The Clearinghouse is funded by the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy and is a component of the [National Criminal Justice Reference Service](#). For further information concerning the contents of this profile or other drug policy issues, contact:

The Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse
PO Box 6000
Rockville, MD 20849-6000
1-800-666-3332
<http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov>
ondcp@ncjrs.org

